

Upper Providence Township
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
March 25, 2019

The Upper Providence Township Planning Commission held its regular monthly business meeting on Monday, March 25, 2019 in the Rose Tree Fire Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. PC members present were Chairman Michael Crotty, Vice-Chairwoman Jackie Larkin, Brian Carr, Brianna Schehr, Joe Solomon and James Zaccaria. Also present were: James P. Kelly - Planning Commission Engineer, Beth Naughton Beck, Planning Commission Solicitor, Gregory Lebold, Township Manager and Kim McCloskey, Administrative Assistant.
Not Present: PC Member Joseph Maylish.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Zaccaria made a motion seconded by Mr. Crotty to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2019 meeting.

Mr. Carr - Yes

Mr. Solomon - Abstain

Ms. Larkin - Yes

Mr. Zaccaria - Yes

Ms. Schehr - Yes

Mr. Crotty - Yes

Motion passed 5-0; 1 abstained

Public Comments and Questions

None

Communications

None

Special Reports by Officers or Committees

None

Old Business

Mr. Crotty informed the Board and audience that the Comprehensive Plan Task Force Committee has been meeting to discuss amendments to the current Comp Plan.

New Business

SDLD - Parking - Rose Tree Elementary

Gus Houtman of GD Houtman & Son Engineers along with Ron Baldino, Supervisor of Maintenance for the RTMSD, presented the proposed SDLD at the Rose Tree Elementary School. They are proposing 8 additional parking spaces in the Evans Blvd. side of the property and 4 new handicap spaces at the main entrance on the First Ave. There will be a reconstruction of the existing walkway for handicap access in front of the main entrance. New lighting will be provided at the proposed handicap parking spaces and new LED luminaires will be put into the existing lights standards at the Evans Blvd. parking lot. SWM will be provided

by an infiltration facility located north of the existing walkway on First Ave. They will comply with the suggested changes by the Township Engineers review letter dated March 8, 2019.

There were questions about the safety of backing out of the handicap spots as they are in the bus loop, including by young Jack Crotty. Mr. Houtman noted that the issue has been looked into and they feel that there should be no conflict with people pulling in or out of those spots when the busses are there. The Evans Blvd. is only one way traffic and pulling in and out of those spots when parents are lined up in the car line were discussed. These spots will be employee parking and cars should not be pulling out while the kids are still in school.

Mr. Crotty expressed concern about people/children walking behind cars at the handicap spaces along First Ave., and if some sort of buffer, such as shrubs could be installed to stop anyone from walking behind the cars. Mr. Houtman informed Mr. Crotty that the School District will look into that option.

Mr. Crotty made a motion seconded by Ms. Larkin to approve the application subject to compliance with the Townships Engineers Review letter dated March 8, 2019 noting suggestions regarding plantings at the First Ave spots and queuing of cars at the Evans Blvd spots.

Mr. Carr - Yes

Mr. Solomon - Yes

Ms. Larkin - Yes

Mr. Zaccaria - Yes

Ms. Schehr - Yes

Mr. Crotty - Yes

Motion passed 5-0

7-13 State Road - Proposed Hotel

Robert Linn, Project Coordinator representing Aria Hotels, initiated the presentation by outlining the changes that were made from previous presentations. The changes included interior modifications by elimination of the indoor pool and exterior changes to the front **façade** by elimination of the front canopy. Mr. Linn reiterated that the existing residential dwelling on Summer Street will remain unchanged. Mr. Linn elaborated on the project by noting the hotel will be 10,800 SF, 3 story hotel with 58 rooms and 64 parking spaces with a chained emergency access easement to Summer Street. Mr. Linn noted that there are currently no stormwater management facilities on the property and this proposal includes facilities in the front of the property, with the impervious in the rear portions of the property connecting to an existing stormwater inlet behind the neighboring homes. Mr. Linn further noted that the site has an existing impervious coverage of 95% impervious coverage and they intend to reduce the impervious coverage to 73.5%.

Mr. Linn noted that the majority of the site is zoned B - business, with approximately 20% in Media Borough, which will require their approval as well.

The rear of the site is zoned R4, which includes a portion of the rear parking area, which is a pre-existing non-conformity.

Alex Moeckel, IHG Director of Development, described the AVID Hotel brand as a design led transient hotel brand which will cater to corporate as well as general leisure and transient travelers. Due to the proximity to the airport, many guests will probably Uber in. Mr. Moeckel described the amenities and features of the hotel and the rooms. Mr. Moeckel explained that IHG has different franchise brands and that this will be an AVID hotel for a term of 20 or more years. He couldn't say for certain what the nightly rate for this hotel would be but the Hampton in Media and the Marriott in Springfield are both above \$150 per night. Mr. Moeckel noted that the franchisee establishes the rate.

Tim Sullivan, Esquire, the applicants attorney addressed Mr. Kelly's review letter and discussed the nonconformity of the parking, the buffer and the impervious coverage. Mr. Sullivan reiterated that the impervious coverage will become conforming. He suggested that Township Council consider changing the zoning map to make this property conforming. He reviewed the zoning comments of the review letter.

Adam Powell, P.E., Engineer for Linn Architects, also addressed the zoning issues of Mr. Kelly's review letter and stated that they will show that there is ample space for any delivery, as well as ensuring that fire and trash trucks are able to maneuver around the building. A lighting plan will be provided when the site and landscaping plans are complete. He discussed the green space, tree and shrub requirements. He reviewed the SLDL items in the review letter and the landscaping plan will be revised to include the correct quantities of plants. They are requesting a waiver to use the Zoning Ordinance regulations regarding plantings as he feels the SLDL version conflicts with this requirement.

Mr. Powell addressed the SWM portion of Mr. Kelly's review letter and restated that the impervious coverage on the site was to be reduced by 15,000 sq. ft. They are providing an infiltration bed at the front of the property in a location that was acceptable to infiltration. The storm water in the rear of the property will be piped to an existing system.

Mr. Powell noted that the lighting in the rear of the building was discussed to make sure that they are conscious and respectful of the residents behind the hotel. A lighting plan will be provided.

He also discussed sidewalk length along Summer Street in front of the existing residential property and the portion of the commercial property. Mr. Powell noted that the applicant would install the sidewalk if required by the Township.

At the conclusion of Mr. Powell's presentation, the Planning Commission members were offered the opportunity to question the application. Mr. Zaccaria noted that the application identified the owner as Aria Hotels and was curious of

the connection with IHG. Mr. Moeckel advised that he cannot confirm who the developer/property is. It was noted, however, that the landowner identified on the plan application is Aria Hotels, Inc. Mr. Moeckel did confirm that the individual is a franchisee of IHG and does have an executed and approved franchise license. He was approved by the IHG Global Board and that the franchisee must meet the IHG guidelines. Under the franchise agreement this operation would be inspected, maintained and scrutinized monthly. Mr. Moeckel further noted that quality assurance members visit monthly to assess the overall upkeep of the hotel and if the franchisee does not meet the brand quality control standards, they can step in to take over the operation.

Mr. Solomon questioned the term of the contract. Mr. Moeckel noted that it would be a 20 year contract. Mr. Moeckel then described the rooms and lobby designs. Additional questions were raised by the Planning Commission as to the split zoning, the stormwater design, the buffering, the need to include a note to prevent occupancy more than 14 consecutive nights per year, the lighting, driver and emergency services access, and the entrances (noting that there will be no rear entrances accessible to the public. As to the deliveries, Mr. Powell noted that no tractor trailers will be used for deliveries. Only smaller delivery trucks. A plan note will be added to that affect.

At the conclusion of questioning by the Planning Commission members, Mr. Crotty opened the questioning to the audience members. Comments and questions were made by residents. There were questions as to why the owner never came to any meetings. Mr. Sullivan noted that he is being represented by the team that is here. There were questions regarding plantings, trees, the sidewalk, the buffer, as well as the amount of parking spaces. There was a question as to what revenue would the township get from this business. Mr. Crotty stated that that is not part of the planning process. Mr. Linn interjected that this will be a 6 to 7 million dollar project. Questions were asked as to what the nightly room rates will be. Mr. Linn said he was unsure but would find out.

Some residents were in support of the proposal and the improvements that will be made to the site. There was a comment about the power lines in front of the hotel and how they look. They will remain.

The integrity of the existing infrastructure was questioned. Mr. Powell advised that they have to apply to AQUA water and sewer and PECO gas and electric. The utilities in this area are equipped to handle this project.

It was asked what controls will be taken during the demolition as this building has been abandoned for so long. Mr. Linn noted that the building has been environmentally tested and there was nothing hazardous noted. Mr. Linn also noted that they will do rodent control and extermination prior to demolition.

Mr. Moeckel noted that the hotel will be pet friendly. Mr. Linn concluded the presentation and advised the Board that they will respond to the engineers review

letter and that a revised set of plans will be submitted. They anticipate have the revisions completed for a presentation in May or June.

Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, Mr. Crotty made a Motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Zaccaria. The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 PM.

Submitted by:

Kimberley McCloskey

Kimberley McCloskey
Administrative Assistant